



National Association for the Advancement of Colored People

Lansing Branch

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NAACP Questions Shooting of Man Fleeing Arrest at Meijer

LANSING – After recently viewing disturbing video of East Lansing Police officers shooting DeAnthony VanAtten, a 20-year-old black man who appeared to be unarmed, the Lansing Branch NAACP has questions regarding the department’s policies and procedures. In viewing the footage, the officer shot VanAtten while he was fleeing in the East Lansing Meijer parking lot located at 1350 W. Lake Lansing Road. The officer did not appear to be in imminent danger. Police fired at VanAtten six times, which appears to be over-excessive.

“Watching the footage draws questions of the accountability, training, and the use of deadly force,” said Dale Copedge, president of the NAACP Lansing Branch. “We are fortunate that Mr. VanAtten was not killed. Why did the police use deadly force on an unarmed black man? We demand answers and call for a thorough investigation. Based on the footage, we also wonder if some other means of subduing Mr. VanAtten was possible. We will continue to monitor this situation.”

East Lansing’s Chief Kim Johnson’s has offered to give information to the Lansing Branch, including video footage from inside the store. This may help determine the intent of the officers prior to shooting Mr. VanAtten. The Lansing Branch also contacted Lt. Gillion of the Michigan State Police. He stated they would release their findings to the Branch when the investigation is completed. We are calling for a complete and thorough investigation of this unfortunate incident.

Founded in 1909, the NAACP is the largest and most pre-eminent civil rights organization in the nation.

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